



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Indigenous counting for 2006 Census continues

Responding to some local press reports, the Australian Bureau of Statistics today reassured Northern Territory Indigenous communities that they will be counted in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

"The counting of remote Indigenous communities for the 2006 Census is underway and will continue up until the 28 August," said the ABS's Regional Director for the Northern Territory, Robyn Elliott.

"Our message to the Indigenous communities is don't worry, you won't be missed. The ABS understands fully what the Census means to the Northern Territory."

"The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, and a major focus of the NT Census team is to ensure a quality count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the Territory," said Ms Elliott.

"Census statistics benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities in the Territory. Information collected from the Census helps governments and communities alike with planning and the allocation of things like education, housing and health services."

"Our overall count in the Territory is going very well, although in an exercise of this size there will be isolated cases outside of Indigenous communities where people may have missed a form."

"This is not a major issue. If you still don't have a Census form, and you are not in a remote Indigenous community please contact our local office here on telephone (08) 8943 2130 and we will get one to you."

Ms Elliott said the ABS employed Indigenous Assistants to help count Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in places with significant areas of public housing, hospitals, boarding schools or homeless people to provide advice or to assist people to complete their Census forms.

The Indigenous Assistants work at the community level to encourage participation in the Census, explaining the importance of the Census and doing the Census by interview where required due to language difficulties including translating in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language where appropriate.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), which is running the Census, conducts the

Census in remote and urban Indigenous communities on a rolling basis, with the count commencing in some Indigenous communities as early as July. It is anticipated that all communities will be counted by the end of August, though if needed, the ABS will continue into September to ensure all communities are counted.

An important part of this strategy is that Indigenous people are employed to work in the communities where they live and trained to conduct the Census using an interview approach. This is part of an ongoing strategy to improve the accuracy and quality of information collected for people in remote and urban Aboriginal communities. This is done over time, and involves the employment of as many as 900 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in urban and remote areas across the Northern Territory, mostly as Collector Interviewers and Community Coordinators.

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